

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
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AMEMBASSY BONN

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 303516

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SCUL, PFOR, GE, US

SUBJECT: US-GDR CULTURAL RELATIONS

REF: BERLIN 7201, 7151, 7146, 7095, 6902, 6884, 6869;

STATE 229943

1.DESPITE SOMEWHAT CONFUSING SIGNALS CONVEYED BY DIFFERENT
GDR OFFICIALS RE US-GDR CULTURAL RELATIONS (RETELS FROM
BERLIN), PRINCIPAL THRUST OF GDR APPROACH APPEARS TO BE
(A) STRONG PREFERENCE FOR FORMAL CULTURAL AGREEMENT, AND
(B) WILLINGNESS AND EVEN DESIRE TO PROCEED WITH SPECI-
FIC STEPS BUT AN AVERSION TO ANYTHING AS FORMAL-SOUNDING
AS "CULTURAL PLAN", AGREEMENT TO WHICH MIGHT, IN GDR VIEW,
UNDERCUT THEIR QUEST FOR FORMAL CULTURAL AGREEMENT.

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2.DEPARTMENT NOTES EMBASSY'S VIEW (BERLIN 7151, PARA 3E)

THAT CULTURAL AGREEMENT WOULD BE IN OUR INTEREST. THIS WOULD BE CHANGE IN POLICY TOWARD GDR WHICH WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO MAKE AT THIS TIME.

3. IN MEANTIME, WE PROPOSE PROCEEDING WITH FOLLOWING PLAN OF ACTIVITIES (WHICH WE DO NOT RPT NOT NEED TO REFER TO AS A CULTURAL PLAN):

A. AMERICAN FILM RETROSPECTIVE. MARCH 1977 DATE (BERLIN 7151) WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO DEPARTMENT AND USIA. EMBASSY SHOULD MAKE SPECIFIC PROPOSAL ON DATE AND PLACE AND URGE GDR TO CONFIRM ARRANGEMENTS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. PROPOSAL ON CONTENT OF RETROSPECTIVE WAS SENT IN SEPTTEL.

B. PAUL STRAND PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBIT IN NOVEMBER AT HUMBOLDT UNIVERSITY. EMBASSY SHOULD CONFIRM DETAILS WITH GDR.

C. A US-GDR SEMINAR ON AMERICAN LITERATURE IN EAST BERLIN, WITH APPROXIMATELY FIVE U.S. PARTICIPANTS (WHETHER RESIDENT HERE OR TEMPORARILY IN EUROPE), TO INCLUDE ONE NAME AUTHOR. EMBASSY SUGGESTION ON TIMING WOULD BE APPRECIATED.

D. PERFORMING ARTS ATTRACTION. DEPARTMENT IS EXAMINING PERFORMING ARTS GROUPS POSSIBLY AVAILABLE FOR APPEARANCE IN GDR DURING 1977. IN ORDER TO MOVE FORWARD WITH CULTURAL DISCUSSIONS, WE BELIEVE EMBASSY SHOULD PROPOSE TO THE GDR THAT AGREEMENT BE REACHED IN PRINCIPLE THAT AT LEAST ONE US PERFORMING ARTS GROUP, PROBABLY A SMALL MUSICAL OR DANCE GROUP, APPEAR IN THE GDR IN 1977. DEPARTMENT WILL PROVIDE SPECIFIC PROPOSALS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, BUT BEFORE APPROACHING GROUPS RE THEIR AVAILABILITY DEPT WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S RECOMMENDATION AS TO HOW APPEARANCE WOULD BE ORGANIZED. WOULD EMBASSY PREFER A FULLY SPONSORED GROUP OR ONE TO WHICH WE PROVIDE FACILITATIVE ASSISTANCE? IF LATTER, HOW WOULD ACCOMMODATIONS AND PAYMENT BE ARRANGED?

E. WE ARE CONSIDERING INCREASING IREX PROGRAM BUT MUST AWAIT CLARIFICATION OF BUDGET SITUATION ON WHICH WE MAY HAVE READING BY MARCH. IN MEANTIME EMBASSY SHOULD SUGGEST TO GDR (AS WE ARE SUGGESTING TO IREX) THAT THEY COME UP
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WITH CANDIDATES FOR AN EXPANDED PROGRAM BUT MAKE CLEAR THAT FUNDING OF CANDIDATES BEYOND PRESENT LEVEL NOT ASSURED.

4. EMBASSY SHOULD SEEK GDR CONCURRENCE IN PRINCIPLE WITH PROGRAM PROPOSED ABOVE, AND PIN DOWN AS MANY DETAILS AS POSSIBLE FOR EVENTS ALREADY AGREED. KISSINGER

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